

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 AID-05 IGA-02 MC-02 OMB-01 L-03 /057 W

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R 111352Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC 2701

INFO SECDEF WASHINGTON DC

S E C R E T MANAMA 024

E.O. 11652 : GDS

TAGS : MASS, BA

SUBJECT : BAHRAINI REQUEST FOR U.S. MILITARY EQUIPMENT
AND TRAINING

1. IN PAST, EMBASSY HAS SUCCESSFULLY PURSUED POLICY OF NOT RESPONDING FORMALLY TO BAHRAIN DEFENSE FORCE (BDF) REQUESTS FOR U.S. MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING UNTIL THE REQUEST COMES TO US THROUGH THE FORMAL CHANNEL OF A DIPLOMATIC NOTE. THE REASON FOR THIS PROCEDURE HAS BEEN THE TENDENCY OF THE DEFENSE FORCE, COMMANDED BY THE CROWN PRINCE/DEFENSE MINISTER, TO TRY TO PURSUE WEAPONS AND TRAINING ACQUISITION SCHEMES WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN APPROVED BY THE GOB. AT THE SAME TIME, AT THE REQUEST OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER, THE EMBASSY HAS MAINTAINED DIRECT CONTACT, USUALLY AT THE FIRST SECRETARY-BDF CHIEF-OF-STAFF LEVEL, TO DISCUSS INFORMALLY CERTAIN BDF MODERNIZATION SCHEMES AND ON OCCASION THE AMBASSADOR HAS DEALT DIRECTLY WITH THE CROWN PRINCE. THE THRUST OF THESE CONTACTS HAS OFTEN BEEN TO DISCOURAGE THE BDF FROM PURSUING UNREALISTIC, UN-NECESSARY OR UNFEASIBLE TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT GOALS.

2. THE EMBASSY IS NOW IN RECEIPT OF TWO LETTERS FROM THE CHIEF-OF-STAFF REQUESTING THE PURCHASE OF A SMALL NUMBER OF LCVP'S AND A TRAINING SLOT FOR A BAHRAINI OFFICER AT THE FORT LEAVENWORTH STAFF AND COMAND COLLEGE. THESE WILL BE SUBJECT OF SEPTELS.

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3. JANUARY 10 AMBASSADOR BROUGHT THESE TWO REQUESTS TO

ATTENTION FOREIGN MINISTER, WHO HAD NOT BEEN AWARE OF THEM. IN RESPONSE TO THE AMBASSADOR'S QUERY, THE FOREIGN MINISTER MADE IT VERY CLEAR THAT SUCH REQUESTS BY THE BDF HAVE NO FORMAL STATUS WHATSOEVER. FOREIGN MINISTER REITERATED THAT BAHRAIN PURCHASES OF FOREIGN MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING REQUIRE CABINET APPROVAL AND THAT ANY FORMAL REQUEST TO THE U.S. WILL COME TO THE EMBASSY IN THE FORM OF A FOREIGN MINISTRY NOTE. HE NOTED APOLOGETICALLY THAT CABINET HAS PROBLEMS KEEPING BDF IN LINE ON SUCH MATTERS. AMBASSADOR AGREED WITH FOREIGN MINISTER THAT IN CASE OF REQUESTS SUCH AS ABOVE, EMBASSY WOULD TREAT THEM AS INFORMAL AND EXPLORATORY, SOMETIMES SEEKING NECESSARY INFORMATION FROM WASHINGTON AND FOLLOWING UP WITH INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH BDF. IT WAS FURTHER AGREED, HOWEVER, THAT FOREIGN MINISTER WOULD BE KEPT GENERALLY INFORMED OF SUCH INQUIRIES AND DISCUSSIONS AND THAT USG WOULD NOT ACT ON ANY BAHRAIN REQUESTS UNTIL THEY HAD BEEN FORMALLY PRESENTED AS DESCRIBED ABOVE.

TWINAM

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY TRAINING, MILITARY EQUIPMENT, MILITARY ASSISTANCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MANAMA00024
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760010-0193
From: MANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760168/aaaachzp.tel
Line Count: 79
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 JUN 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <28 OCT 2004 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: : BAHRAINI REQUEST FOR U.S. MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING
TAGS: MASS, BA, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006